

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-14 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /143 W

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P 121339Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2861

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 3814

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MO SP PBOR

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: DIPLOMATIC UPSWING

SUMMARY: MOROCCAN-SPANISH DIALOGUE PICKING UP WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISIT TO MADRID BY PRIMIN OSMAN AND FONMIN LARAKI TO TAKE PLACE AUG 12. TRIP FOLLOWS OULD DADDAH'S VISIT TO RABAT, MARKED BY CORDIALITY AND AGREEMENT TO KEEP IN TOUCH ON SAHARA, AND RECENT ALGERIAN POLICY STATEMENT, WHICH WELCOMED HERE. LATTER DEVELOPMENTS POINT TO POSSIBLE THAW AMONG ARAB PARTIES INTERESTED IN SAHARA DISPUTE. END SUMMARY.

1. VISIT TO MADRID BY PRIMIN OSMAN AND FONMIN LARAKI ANNOUNCED BY GOM AUG 12. MOROCCANS TO BE RECEIVED BY SPANISH PRIMIN AND FONMIN IN MADRID SAME DAY. SPANISH EMBASSY HERE IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN CURRENT SPANISH-MOROCCAN ATMOSPHERE.

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2. MADRID TRIP FOLLOWS 24-HOUR STOPOVER IN RABAT AUG 9

AND 10 BY MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN MOUKNASS, ON WAY HOME FROM ALGIERS. IMMEDIATELY ON ARRIVAL, OULD DADDAH WENT INTO TALKS WITH KING HASSAN. THIS SESSION WAS FOLLOWED BY WELL-PUBLICIZED DINNER HOSTED BY KING AND ATTENDED BY PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT FIGURES. ATMOSPHERE OF VISIT DEPICTED AS HIGHLY CORDIAL BY SEMI-OFFICIAL MEDIA.

3. FRIENDLY TONE ALSO REFLECTED IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED FOLLOWING MAURITANIAN VISIT. TWO CHIEFS OF STATE, "IN CLIMATE MARKED BY UNDERSTANDING," DISCUSSED SAHARA AND THE TWO GOVERNMENTS DECIDED TO REMAIN IN CONTACT REGARDING LIQUIDATION OF COLONIALISM IN THAT REGION, ACCORDING COMMUNIQUE. EFFORTS ALSO ENVISAGED TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND OULD DADDAH MADE POINT OF THANKING MOROCCANS FOR HOSPITALITY DISPLAYED DURING VISIT.

4. COMMENT: OSMAN AND LARAKI VISIT TO MADRID COULD WELL PROVE MAJOR STEP TOWARD IMPROVING CURRENT ATMOSPHERE, ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER BREAKTHROUGH TOWARD SUBSTANTIVE AGREEMENT ON THORNY SAHARA PROBLEM CAN BE ACHIEVED. IN ANY CASE, DIALOGUE, BY SUSTAINING APPEARANCE OF POLITICAL MOMENTUM, PRESUMABLY LESSENS POSSIBILITY OF RASH MOVE BY GOM, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING.

5. GOM IS OBVIOUSLY INTENT ON HAVING ACTIVE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS UNDERWAY WHICH WILL KEEP SPOTLIGHT ON SAHARA, WITH UNGA AS ONE FOCUS IN NEAR TERM. AT SAME TIME, THIS SEEMS PROPITIOUS MOMENT FROM MOROCCAN POINT OF VIEW TO STEP UP DIALOGUE WITH MADRID. AS BACKDROP, MOROCCAN EMISSARIES TO VARIOUS WORLD CAPITALS ALREADY BEGINNING TO RETURN HOME, AMID GLOWING PRESS REPORTS OF SUPPORT THEY HAVE LINED UP FOR MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA. MADRID TRIP WILL AVERT LULL FOLLOWING EMISSARIES' RETURN, AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURE GOM'S CAMPAIGN MAY HAVE GENERATED ON GOS THUS FAR.

6. ON MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN-ALGERIAN EXCHANGES, GOM HAS PUT BEST FACE ON OULD DADDAH VISIT, AND SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS HAS PRAISED RECENT ALGERIAN STATEMENT (ALGIERS 1734).
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THUS, GOM IS AT LEAST PLAYING DOWN IN PUBLIC ITS DIFFERENCES WITH ALGERIANS AND MAURITANIANS. WHETHER THIS REFLECTS ACTUAL MOVEMENT TOWARD SUBSTANTIVE AGREEMENT REMAINS UNCLEAR.
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